WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for storing and referencing symbolically linked information comprising the steps of:

processing a symbol to generate a master symbol;

determining a unique parent identifier corresponding to the master symbol;

storing the parent identifier and the master symbol in a master symbol database wherein the master symbol is linked to the parent identifier;

storing at least one information element wherein the at least one information element is linked to the parent identifier.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of processing the symbol to generate the master symbol includes the step of applying a set of character rules to the symbol.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of processing the symbol to generate the master symbol includes the step of applying a set of process rules to the symbol.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the at least one information element is a document.

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein each master symbol is structured according to a symbol template containing at least one symbol field.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein each master symbol includes at least one symbol segment corresponding respectively to the at least symbol field defined by the symbol template.

7. The method according to claim 6, wherein each master symbol refers to a security issued by a company.

8. The method according to claim 7, wherein the symbol template includes a root symbol field referring to the name of a security and a source symbol field referring to a country in which the security is traded.

9. The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of storing at least one information element includes the steps of generating an information element identifier, storing the information element identifier and the parent identifier so that the parent identifier is linked to the information element identifier, and storing the information element and the information element identifier so that the information element identifier is linked to the information element.

10. The method according to claim 6, wherein each symbol segment comprises an ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange) string.

11. The method according to claim 9, wherein the parent identifier is linked to the information element identifier in a relational database.

12. A method for the archival of symbolically linked information comprising the steps of:

receiving an information element and at least an input symbol;

processing the input symbol to generate a normalized symbol;

searching a master symbol database using the normalized symbol to find a matching master symbol and linked parent identifier; and

storing at least the parent identifier and the information element so that the parent identifier is linked to the information element.

13. The method according to claim 12, wherein the step of processing the input symbol to generate the normalized symbol includes the step of applying a set of

character rules to the input symbol.

14. The method according to claim 12, wherein the step of processing the symbol to generate the master symbol includes the step of applying a set of process rules to the symbol.

15. The method according to claim 12, wherein the information element is a document.

16. The method according to claim 12, wherein the master symbol database stores a set of master symbols, wherein each master symbol is structured according to a symbol template containing at least one symbol field.

17. The method according to claim 16, wherein each master symbol includes at least one symbol segment corresponding respectively to the at least symbol field defined by the symbol template.

18. The method according to claim 17, wherein each master symbol refers to a security issued by a company.

19. The method according to claim 18, wherein the symbol template includes a root symbol field referring to the name of a security and a source symbol field referring to a country in which the security is traded.

20. The method according to claim 12, wherein the step of storing the information element includes the steps of generating an information element identifier, storing the information element identifier and the parent identifier so that the parent identifier is linked to the information element identifier, and storing the information element and the information element identifier so that the information element identifier is linked to the information element.

21. The method according to claim 17, wherein each symbol segment comprises an ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange) string.

22. The method according to claim 20, wherein the parent identifier is linked to the information element identifier in a relational database.

23. The method according to claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

if the normalized symbol contains an unresolved segment, searching a contributor database to find a predominant use segment, and

assigning the predominant use segment to the unresolved segment.

24. The method according to claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

if the normalized symbol is not found in the master symbol database, searching a database using the input symbol, and

retrieving a parent identifier linked to the input symbol.

25. A method for the retrieval of symbolically linked information, comprising the steps of:

receiving an input symbol;

processing the input symbol to generate a normalized symbol;

searching a master symbol database using the normalized symbol to find a matching master symbol and a parent identifier linked to the master symbol;

searching an information element database to find an information element linked with the parent identifier; and

retrieving the information element linked to the parent identifier.

26. The method according to claim 25, further comprising the steps of:

determining whether the input symbol includes an unresolved segment; and

if the input symbol contains an unresolved segment, searching a client database to find a client preference segment, and assigning the client preference segment to the unresolved segment.

27. The method according to claim 25, wherein the step of processing the input symbol to generate the normalized symbol includes the step of applying a set of character rules to the symbol.

28. The method according to claim 25, wherein the step of processing the input symbol to generate a normalized symbol comprises applying a set of process rules to the symbol.

29. The method according to claim 25, wherein the information element is a document.

30. The method according to claim 25, wherein the master symbol database stores a set of master symbols, wherein each master symbol is structured according to a symbol template containing at least one symbol field.

31. The method according to claim 30, wherein each master symbol is structured according to a symbol template containing at least one symbol field.

32. The method according to claim 31, wherein each master symbol includes at least one symbol segment corresponding to the at least symbol field defined by the symbol template.

33. The method according to claim 32, wherein each master symbol refers to a security issued by a company.

34. The method according to claim 33, wherein the symbol template includes a root symbol field referring to the name of a security and a source symbol field referring to a country in which the security is traded.

35. The method according to claim 32, wherein each symbol segment comprises an ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange) string.

36. The method according to claim 25, wherein the information database is a relational database.

37. A document repository system allowing electronic archival of documents using an input symbol comprising:

a storage device;

a network interface;

a processor coupled to the storage device, said processor adapted to:

store a database of master symbols, wherein each master symbol is linked to a parent identifier and a document database;

receive an input symbol and a document via the network interface,

process the input symbol to obtain a normalized input symbol,

search the master symbol database using the normalized input symbol to find a matching master symbol and a linked parent identifier,

store the document in the document database so that the document is linked to the parent identifier.

38. The document repository system according to claim 37, wherein:

if the input symbol contains at least one unresolved segment, for each unresolved symbol segment, the processor searches a contributor historical pattern database to find a predominant use segment, and assigns the predominant use segment to the unresolved segment.

39. A document repository system allowing electronic retrieval of documents using an input symbol, comprising:

a storage device storing a master symbol database and a document database, the master symbol database storing master symbols, wherein each master symbol is linked to a parent identifier, and the document database storing documents linked to a parent identifier;

a network interface;

a processor, which:

receives an input symbol via the network interface,

processes the input symbol to obtain a normalized input symbol,

searches the symbol database using the normalized input symbol to find a matching master symbol and a linked parent identifier, and

retrieves documents from the document database that are linked to the parent identifier.

40. The document repository system according to claim 39, wherein:
if the input symbol contains at least one unresolved segment, for each unresolved symbol segment, the processor searches a client database to find a client preference segment, and assigns the client preference segment to the unresolved segment.